

And if one day the Democratic leadership in Serbia is created, we Hungarians are ready to share our experience in building democracy with the Serbian people, with the Serbian leadership. And we are prepared to do what we have done with other neighboring countries already. We are going to tell them not only what we have done correctly and well, what we are going to tell them where we made a mistake, where we made an error, because it's a matter of course that sometimes one makes mistakes. But if through good advice you can avoid at least one mistake, then it was worth it.

We are prepared to extend a helping hand to a democratic Serbian government, to the Serbian people, because we know what bombing means from our own experience. We know what has to be restored—bridges, oil refineries, infrastructure, but primarily and foremost, the belief of the people in the future—the faith in humanity, belief in the willingness of the people to help each other.

And if we manage to help all the wounds that were acquired during the war since 1992, and we manage to resolve all the hatred, which may take even two generations, then we have to give them help and assistance to make the first first.

It was a gratifying and a good feeling to me to have understanding between the two sides. Because you can feed in information about the amount of bombs you want to drop; you can feed in costs; but there is one thing you cannot feed in, in a computer—the past of a nation, the mentality of the people, the moral feelings, eventual solidarity or hostility. I can see that the American leadership is ready to consider that, as well, after the success of the air campaign and, perhaps, even more so, afterwards.

The serious negotiations we have had here in Washington, D.C., I will take that home with me as one of the greatest experiences in my life. First, because I was really convinced that it is possible for a big country and a small country to become real allies on the basis of equality. And I do hope, Mr. President, you're not going to misunderstand me if I say, I am taking with me the experience of a new friendship, as well, with me.

Perhaps I cannot say anymore than that. If you want, I can tell you all the political slogans that you know by heart here, but I suppose these few things are a lot more worthy. For the Hungarians, for the Serbs, for the Kosovars, for the whole of Central Europe, I do hope, out of the bottom of my heart, that all the generals of NATO—and perhaps it will all help us to understand the events and developments of our days.

Once again, I apologize for speaking in Hungarian, but I suppose it was better to tell that in Hungarian than mumbling it in English. Thank you for listening to me.

HONORING THE SPECIAL GRADUATES OF THE JOHN D. WELLS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 1999

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating special graduates of the 12th Congressional District of New York. I am certain that this day marks the culmination of much effort and hard work which has led and will lead them to continued success. In these times of uncertainty, limited resources, and random violence in our commu-

nities and schools, it is encouraging to know that they have overcome these obstacles and succeeded.

These students have learned that education is priceless. They understand that education is the tool to new opportunities and greater endeavors. Their success is not only a tribute to their strength but also to the support they have received from their parents and loved ones.

In closing, I encourage all my colleagues to support the education of the youth of America. With a solid education, today's youth will be tomorrow's leaders. And as we approach the new millennium, it is our responsibility to pave the road for this great Nation's future. Members of the U.S. House of Representatives I ask you to join me in congratulating the following Academic Achievement Award Recipients: Lizandro Gonzalez and Aris Rodriguez.

WOMEN IN CONSERVATIVE POLITICS

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 1999

Mrs. KELLY. Mrs. Speaker, I insert the attached speech for the RECORD. This speech was given by Fanny Palli-Petralia, a member of Greece's Parliament at a conference that was held in Washington, D.C., in March of this year, hosted by the International Women's Democratic Union. I found it to be quite insightful and would recommend it to my colleagues.

[At the Conference of IWDU, Washington, Mar. 3-5, 1999]

ADDRESS BY THE HONORABLE FANNY PALLI-PETRALIA

First, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the organizers of the conference for the invitation to participate and address this gathering. I consider it a privilege and a unique opportunity to share with leaders from all over the world my perspectives on the role of women contemporary politics and the problems they face in Europe and especially my own country. I am referring of course, to women belonging to the conservative, or as I prefer to state, Center and Center-Right ideological spectrum.

However, before I discuss specific problems I believe it is necessary for us to define or redefine certain concepts and to reflect on the following question: what defines conservative politics in our time. I believe a new definition of conservatism is essential, given the fact that the central criterion used to distinguish between Right and Left ideology i.e.—i.e. economic philosophy—is no longer valid. As we all know, belief in a free market economy, espoused by conservative thinkers has been coopted with unrestrained enthusiasm by old and new liberals. Whether we are talking about Great Britain, Germany or the United States, we see Social Democrats, Liberals and their American equivalent, the Democratic Party, endorsing and applying Milton Friedman's doctrine of free markets with the zeal usually displayed by late converts to a cause. No wonder that we now see big business, traditionally viewed as allies of conservative parties, moving to the socialist corner of the political arena. I have only one explanation for this phenomenon: either big business cannot see the difference between the two philosophies, which I doubt, or the dividing lines between ideological camps

have been blurred beyond recognition. In either case, now that our economic philosophy has caused global mass conversion among the liberal ranks, there is a need to differentiate our agenda by other criteria.

Now that liberal and the left-wing politicians have embraced free market over socialist planning, we have to ask what is next in our philosophical agenda in an era that often seems as being in a moral drift? The answer, in my opinion, is obvious: though the economic philosophy of conservatism has triumphed, a cultural war is under way globally and whether we want it or not, we must be concerned and respond. Far too many of the core values that served as the glue to keep society in harmony have been trashed and a climate of moral relativism permeates the industrial world. We are witnesses to a troubling trend since the collapsed of the Communist bloc: traditions, family, history, religion, culture are under assault by "feel good crowd." These are the values that have and ought to distinguish the Center-Right political parties: we cherish them while the Liberal left makes them optional.

The question is what is the role of women in the field of culture? At the risk of sounding immodest, let me state at the outset that women have always been in the forefront of cultural battles and helped shape the core values of free societies. More precisely, women have been persistent defenders of human rights and effectively linked rights, values, economics and politics and in the process, redefined the latter for the better. However it is also true that, by and large, the contributions of women in the political life of nations and the affirmation of social and political values have been achieved through men. The old cliché "next to a great man stands a greater woman," still rings true. But our concern today is not what Aspasia or Theodora, Eleanor Roosevelt, or Hillary Clinton have done behind the scenes. The question is what happens in the public domain—and here is where a convergence of view emerges among women of all political persuasions.

II

It is obvious that inequalities between men and women persist and opportunities for women are limited by artificial barriers in all societies, including the United States where the struggle for equality started, at end of the 19th century.

As conservative women and political leaders in our own right, we can not ignore gender disparities in public life; neither can we ignore the fact that traditions and values, prevalent for generations, do play a role in defining our place in contemporary society. Because women have played a central role in defining core values, they must now assume a similar role in defining a political system that assures the promotion of the most central of all values—equality without qualifications.

I am cognizant of the fact that social trends take time to be set in motion and even more time to be reversed. We cannot ignore the role of history and special conditions that have played a role in determining a woman's place in society. In Southern Europe, for example, cultural factors, religion and social attitudes made change a slow and arduous process when compared to northern European societies. For example, the right to vote in my country, Greece, was granted to women in 1952 and full equality in all walks of life was constitutionally guaranteed in 1974.

III

The equal rights movement in Europe, in which women from all political persuasions participated, was fought not only to secure basic political and individual rights but also